

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph 0024 with the following amended paragraph:

[0024] The use of closed ink ~~patterns~~ systems as described above results in that the quantity of solvents which escapes from the ink system is very small. This results in a remarkably smaller exploding danger, in contrast to existing systems such as with an open ink system with a scraping beam. The drawback thereof is that the ink is exposed to the air over a large surface. It is necessary to have an ink circulation system that also controls automatically the viscosity of the ink. Fast yet, evaporating solvents are used so that the ink becomes unusable very quickly, typically in some ten of minutes time, without this viscosity control system. The evaporating solvents may generate dangerous conditions of fire and explosions.

Please replace paragraph 0025 with the following amended paragraph:

[0025] The ink used in the pharmaceutical sector is ~~thixotrope~~ thixotropic. Keeping the viscosity of the ink at the right level is thereby rendered still more difficult. When operating wrongly, the viscosity control system can become yet quickly unstable.

Please replace paragraph 0047 with the following amended paragraph:

[0047] A very smooth table plate 14 is used for a conveyor system for tablets as shown in figure 6. Besides, the apparatus parts, and more specifically those of the conveyor system for tablets are

as plane and smooth as possible, so that they can be cleaned and disinfected in a simple way. Easily removable segments 17 are mounted above this table plate, which are arranged in a floating way some tens of millimetres above the table plate 14. The segments are provided with holes 24 wherein the tablets 6 fit. By moving the segments in a direction over the table plate 18, the tablets 6 are carried away. They rest yet on the very smooth table plate 14.

Please replace paragraph 0051 with the following amended paragraph:

[0051] Figures 9 and 10 show how a pad 29 rolls over the tablet during the printing phase without slipping.

Please replace paragraph 0052 with the following amended paragraph:

[0052] When depositing the printing image of the pad on the tablets, there is a risk that the tablets keep hanging on the pad due to their low weight and the stickiness of some inks. In order to prevent this, a vacuum chamber 29 is provided under the table plate 14 at the printing position, i.e. directly under the print head, which vacuum chamber holds the tablets 6 during the printing operation through little holes 39 in the table plate 14 as shown in figure 8. The needed vacuum can be supplied by an electrical vacuum pump in combination with a vacuum valve which is controlled in such a way that there is a vacuum under the tablets only at the time that the printing operation effectively takes place, and thus not when the tablets are moved. Advantageously, a vacuum block has not to be changed again, but only the upper plate thereof.

Please replace paragraph 0053 with the following amended paragraph:

[0053] The print head 25 is of the linear pad printing type with closed ink ~~pattern~~ system. The operation thereof is represented in the lateral view of figure 11 where the closed ink ~~pattern~~ system 30, the pad 31, the cliché 33 and the segment with the tablets 32 are represented. The operation of the tablet conveyor system is set out by means of the diagrammatic representations represented in cross section in figure 11.

Please replace paragraph 0054 with the following amended paragraph:

[0054] Position A is the starting position. Starting therefrom the pad 31 is moved downwardly in a substantially vertical moving direction indicated by arrow F1 in order to take up ink from a ~~elieh~~ cliché 33. After taking ink in position B, the pad returns back up in position A. In position C, said pad with the transferred image is moved frontward in a substantially horizontal moving direction G1, until above the tablets to be printed in the segment 32. At the same time, the ink ~~pattern~~ system 30 slides frontward in order to ink the engraving in the cliché 33. The pad 31 is moved downwardly in position D and deposits the transferred image on the tablets after which the pad is moved again upwards in position C. Subsequently the pad 31 moves back to the starting position A and the closed ink pattern 30 is moved back to the starting position.